



Community Health is an integral part of Swan Hill District Health and is located at 125 Campbell Street in Swan Hill

SEASONS GREETINGS



As we very quickly move towards the end of 2022, it is a good time to reflect on our outcomes for the year and our plans for the future.

Our community has recently been impacted by flooded rivers, high levels of rainfall, and the risk of Japanese Encephalitis Virus (JEV) infection. These emerging public health events have placed an added burden on many, with mental health and wellbeing impacts. Please reach out for support if needed, see page 2 for details.

The team here at 125 Campbell Street would like to wish everyone a safe and relaxing festive season and look forward to working together in 2023!



Community Health will be closed between Christmas & New Year

COVID-19 UPDATE

2022 has brought a change to our response to the Covid-19 pandemic, while still maintaining a focus on reducing the virus spread, we are moving towards a more self regulating environment. Community members are encouraged to stay home if unwell, continue social distancing and hand hygiene and to keep up to date with vaccinations.

Our health services are continuing to follow strict rules in regard to mask wearing to keep both the public and the health workers safe. Please be mindful that mask wearing is an important public health measure especially when dealing with those who are unwell and enables our staff to continue to provide services.

Be kind and be safe.

Keeping Covid-19 safe

- stay home if you have Covid for at least 5 days and until you have no symptoms
- talk to your doctor if you are risk of falling very sick, you may be eligible for Covid medicines
- wear a mask
- wash your hands
- keep your distance
- get your Covid-19 booster vaccination
- test if you have symptoms
- open windows & doors when you can, it reduces the virus spread



MENTAL WELLBEING

2022 has brought many daily stresses to our lives and as we head to the holidays increase in stress levels and mental illness can occur. Please reach out for help if you are having concerns.

Eating well, exercising regularly, getting enough sleep and avoiding harmful levels of alcohol and other drugs can help you keep your mental health on track and improve your overall wellbeing.

Go to www.headsup.org.au for more tips.



eat fruit & veg **move** more often **smile** together

Mental Health Support Services:

- Your local GP
- Local mental health professionals
- Lifeline- 131 114
- Beyond Blue- 1300 224 636
- MensLine- 1300 789 978
- Kid's Helpline- 1800 55 1800
- Parent Line- 13 22 89

Swan Hill District Health services:

Counselling Services 03 5033 9880
headspace Swan Hill 03 4010 7100





Health Promotion

GENDER EQUITY IN THE EARLY YEARS

The Swan Hill District Gender Equity Network, during the 16 Days of Activism, promoted that ‘ Respect is... giving all genders equal opportunities’.

This year we worked with playgroups to promote gender equity with those aged 0-5 and their families in the Swan Hill District. The playgroups were provided with packs that include gender equitable storybooks, community guides to gender equity and ‘Respect is reading gender neutral stories’ bookmarks.



Play groups are an important place to promote gender equity as children form their ideas around gendered roles from their experience of the world around them at a young age.

Activities to influence ideas of gender include:

- reading gender neutral stories which challenge gender stereotypes
- starting open conversations around gender
- providing children the same choice of play regardless of gender

On the 30th of November there was a Gender Equity Story Walk. This event was run in collaboration with Swan Hill Regional Library, Swan Hill District Health, Mallee Family Care (MFC), and BPW Swan Hill.

The book which was read along the walk from the library to the clocktower was ‘I want to be a Superhero’ by Breanna Humes. This book is all about Breanna who wants to be a superhero. She asks family and friends if she can become a superhero by wishing upon a shooting star. She tries but it doesn’t work. Breanna is finally happy with the idea of working hard and becoming a superhero doctor, lawyer, engineer or vet. But she still wants to fly!

After the story walk Courtney from MFC read ‘I could be, You could be’ by Karen Owen, which was all about being yourself. The children enjoyed an activity to colour-in cardboard cut outs of cars and trucks. This activity was all about having conversations around all genders being able to do any job role.



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Health Promotion

FOOD FOR ALL - SWAN HILL

Food for All has opened the Swan Hill Food Hub in August this year. The Food Hub aims to support people in our community who are impacted by food insecurity. The Food Hub aims to break down the barriers for clients to accessing fresh and emergency food relief, by enabling them to stay with their existing agency for food access. The Food Hub is supported by Swan Hill Neighbourhood House. The Food Hub has a refrigerated and an air conditioned shipping container to store both pantry and refrigerated items. It provides emergency food relief through member agencies accessing food on behalf of their clients.

Member agencies include: Swan Hill District Health, Mallee District Aboriginal Services, Mallee Family Care, Anglicare, Swan Hill College FLO campus and SMECC.

WHAT IS THE FOOD HUB?

Food Hub supplying emergency food relief for the Swan Hill community:

- Food Relief support for community through member agencies
- Pantry items
- Seasonal items dependent on what is available
- Refrigerated storage

EARLY YEARS ONLINE HUB

This online local resource is constantly being updated and improved. If you have or care for young children, or are pregnant or planning pregnancy, this is a site that is locally created for you with a range of services, events, programs and information specifically for the early years.

A new site page is now active called **Kids' activities**, with games, recipes and other things to make, and suggestions for children's shows including educational videos. Check it out here: <https://www.earlyyearsonlinehub.org.au/kids-activities>

Early Years Online Hub

Access early years' information and services within the Swan Hill Local Government Area.

The Early Years Online Hub covers just about everything parents and carers need to know about raising children.

- Early childhood services
- Resources and information for families
- Playgrounds & family friendly walks
- Breast feeding & changing facilities
- Services specific to your town
- Event listings for young children

www.earlyyearsonlinehub.org.au



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DIABETES UPDATE

A message from Diabetes Victoria created by Anna Waldron, APD at Diabetes Victoria.



Diabetes Education

Christmas, end-of-year celebrations and summer holidays can mean a change to routine and eating habits.

When you are living with diabetes, this may cause stress and uncertainty about how to best manage your blood glucose levels (BGLs). A couple of unusual days causing slightly higher BGLs are unlikely to be a problem. However, it is best to aim to keep your BGLs within your target range over the longer term and to avoid very high levels.

There are several reasons for higher BGLs over Christmas and the holiday period, including:

- Eating more food! Many festive foods contain carbohydrate so just the fact we tend to eat more will increase BGLs.
- Eating different types of carbohydrate food. We might think it's just the Christmas pudding or pavlova that increase BGLs but all carbohydrate foods (not just the ones with sugar in) will increase BGLs.
- Being less active.

Keep in mind some of these tips to help you manage your diabetes if you are going to a party or have a family celebration:

- Keep an eye on healthy food options; include vegetables and salad, lean meat or seafood for a main meal.
- Try to eat a similar amount of carbohydrate to your usual intake to avoid higher BGLs.
- Limit finger foods such as chips, biscuits, crackers, sausage rolls and fried foods, especially before a meal, as they are high in carbohydrate which will increase your BGLs.
- Enjoy just a small portion of dessert or, instead, have some lovely summer fruit such as berries and mango, as most desserts will affect your BGLs.

Watch what you drink and try to have mainly water, sparkling water or sugar-free drinks. Follow the alcohol guidelines if you are drinking and remember that alcoholic drinks can also impact on your BGLs.

If you would like more information or tips on navigating the festive season, call us on 5033 9337 and make an appointment with a Diabetes Educator or Dietitian.



SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUPS

Swan Hill District Health provide a range of social support groups at Neighbourhood House. The service provides members with recreational and social support through a variety of activities and games, tailored to suit individual interests and hobbies. They celebrate fun activities, special theme days, music and outings, which encourage social interaction and foster friendships.

Seniors aged 65 and over and NDIS-eligible community members may enquire by phoning **03 5033 9359**. All groups held at Swan Hill Neighbourhood House unless specified.



THE SHED - Mondays 9am - 1pm

The Men's Shed is a space for men to work on new or restorative woodwork and painting projects with supervision, promoting personal wellbeing and help maintain independence at home.

Cost \$12 for lunch

ART GROUP - Tuesdays 10am - 2pm

A creative painting group for those with an interest in expressing themselves and working on their personal painting skill. No experience necessary, only a willingness to engage and learn a new skill.

Cost \$12 for lunch

FORGET ME NOTS - Tuesdays 11.30am - 3pm

A group with a focus on dementia support and mental health. Activities assist members to engage with others, reminisce and support conversation and friendships.

Cost \$12 for lunch

CRAFTIES - Wednesdays 9am - 1pm

Crafties is for those with an interest in craft and conversation. Group craft projects or solo activities to occupy your hands, while enjoying conversation and laughter.

Cost \$12 for lunch



CARTE ITALIANE - Wednesdays 1.30Pm - 4pm

A group of Italian-speaking seniors who are interested in expressing themselves and communicating with others by playing cards. There is an emphasis on social support and fun. This group alternates fortnightly with Bingo Italiano.

Cost \$4 for afternoon tea

BINGO ITALIANO - Wednesdays 1.30Pm - 4pm

A group of Italian-speaking seniors who are interested in expressing themselves and communicating with others by playing bingo. There is an emphasis on social support and fun. This group alternates fortnightly with Carte Italiane.

Cost \$4 for afternoon tea

AFGHAN MEN'S - Wednesdays 5pm - 7pm

held at Swan Hill Uniting Church

This group engages local Afghan men in the Swan Hill area to meet and converse with others. Members play games, particularly Carrom, and share a light meal.

Cost FREE

OPALS - Thursdays 10am - 2pm

A group for those who have an interest in socialising, joining in with activities and games and stimulating conversation. Theme days are also held regularly.

Cost \$12 for lunch

GAMES GROUP - Fridays 1pm - 3.30pm

This newly formed group is aimed to challenge those interested in board and card games, with different games to choose from each week, we encourage stimulating conversation and connection.

Cost \$4 for afternoon tea



Dietetics



Healthy eating over the summer months is made easier with the abundance of fresh salad vegetables and fruits in season.

Try growing or buying vegetables such as tomatoes, capsicum, cucumbers, and lettuce varieties which have maximum flavour and goodness in our warmer climate.

Use these in salads, stir-fries, on the barbeque and in wraps, rolls and sandwiches to ensure you get your 5 serves of veggies every day!

Fruits such as berries, stone fruit, melons and grapes are also more plentiful and tasty in summer, and are enjoyed by all ages. Eat fresh, or add to your cereal, some yogurt or even to your salads to add some sweetness and nutrition!

Locally we grow an abundance of fruit and vegetables, so support our farmers and enjoy their harvest!

Check out our blog at <https://eatmovesmile.shdh.org.au/> for more tips and recipes.

SUMMER SALADS

Recently there has been an abundance of avocados available at low cost. This nutritious and delicious fruit with it's rich and creamy texture and mild flavour is high in monounsaturated fat and vitamin E and also a good source of folate.

Over the summer months try adding avocado to your favourite salad.

- Cos or mixed lettuce, washed and torn
- Cherry tomatoes halved
- 2 radishes, finely sliced
- 3 spring onions finely sliced
- 1 lebanese cucumber sliced or diced
- A handful of fresh parsley and mint chopped
- 1 avocado, chopped as desired
- 1/2 tbsp sumac or fresh pinenuts

Dressing: whisk together the following

- 1 garlic clove crushed
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- freshly ground black pepper
- pinch of salt



SELF CARE

For many the holiday season can be very stressful or filled with sadness, possibly due to social situations, money, family tension, isolation, grief or conflict. It is important to prepare for this and practice self care if you find the festive celebrations challenging.

If you are attending or hosting an event where you know the possibilities for tension between family members or guests is high, be prepared.

Consider:

- avoiding difficult topics and have strategies in place to to change the conversation
- using relaxation techniques like slow deep breathing to reduce tension
- limiting alcohol intake.

Be kind to yourself:

- take time out to relax
- practice mindfulness
- reflect on your achievements
- enjoy your favourite pastimes.

For more tips and information go to <http://www.womenswellbeing.com.au/>

<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/personal-best/topics/self-care>



Community Health - Contact Details

125 Campbell Street, Swan Hill 3585

Phone: 03 5033 9337

Fax: 03 5036 4561

Email: chreception@shdh.org.au

